

RECORDING OF PROCEEDINGS

Wyoming Board of Agriculture
March 8, 2011
Conference Call

Present: Jim Hodder
Shaun Sims
Alison Lass
Bryan Brost
Jim Price, Jr.
John Hansen
Dalin Winters
Jason Fearneyhough

Absent: John Moore
Patrick Zimmerer
Bridget Williams
Tony Young – Governor Mead’s Office
Frank Galey, Dear of UW College of Ag and Natural Resources

Staff: Muff Parker, Recording Secretary
Leanne Stevenson

Called to order by Vice President Sims at 7:00

Introduction of all Board Members

Approval of minutes from February 15, 16, and 17, 2011

Jim Price made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 15, 16, and 17, 2011 meeting. The typo of calves to cows on horse slaughter page 6 was corrected. The motion was seconded by John Hansen. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Discussion regarding incentives with the Game and Fish

Jim Hodder wanted to know how and who would do the auctioning of the donated Commissioner licenses being given to the Board of Agriculture. Shaun Sims said they have a trust foundation that does the auctioning on the donated licenses. Shaun will get the information and get back with the board. Shaun asked what they wanted the money to go to. Jim Price would like to see the whole state represented. Shaun Sims said the members had already talked about doing some type of assistance grant to improve the wildlife habitat rather than a cash award. John Hansen said the Game and Fish is not able to give cash awards. Shaun Sims suggested improvements such as fencing and water. Leanne Stevenson asked if it could be run similar to the Stewardship Program. How do we solicit nominations? Jim Price suggested contacting the sportsmen groups or ag associations. Jason said the offer has been made by Game and Fish to announce them at their awards banquet, but he would like to see the venue be the Director’s Reception at State Fair. It was suggested that one be awarded at three venues; Game

and Fish banquet in September; the Director's Reception in August and Stock Growers in June. Shaun wondered if they are awarded before the hunting season. Shaun thinks the auction is around the first part of May.

Brooke Gerke joined the conference call. Wyoming Ag in the Classroom has received commissioner licenses in the past. She said she started the process by sending out the letter to the Commissioners asking for the licenses. They then auction them off on E-bay. This year they are going through the Wildlife Heritage Foundation. She said the money usually followed soon after the auction. She said one year they got \$5,000 for one of them. Brook suggested the board talk to the Commissioners sooner than later. Dalin asked if there were matching funds from another entity, i.e. NRCS or wildlife groups. Shaun said his understanding is that it would be up to the landowner to see if those funds are out there. Dalin suggested putting the information up on the Game and Fish website for exposure. Shaun will get with the Commission to finalize the process.

Legislative Issues

Wild Land Designation – Shaun said it appears there is no statutory authority for the designations. Jason said this is a way to skirt Congressional Authority. Shaun is also concerned about the criteria being used to determine wild lands. Shaun has asked the conservation districts to contact their local BLM office to get the location of the lands the BLM is listing as wild lands and then go out and do some ground thruthing.

EAJA – This act pays fees when there is litigation with the Federal agencies. It has been abused by radical groups. The resolution being proposed would remove the use by non-profit groups. Cynthia Lummis is working on this act.

Land transfer of Seedskaadee irrigation withdrawal to USFWS – Shaun hasn't heard anything lately. Jason said they are moving forward as fast as they can. They are looking as making a sage grouse refuge. BLM ground surrounds it as well and they are talking about adding it to the refuge area. He is concerned about all the issues that surround a refuge designation such as water and grazing. Shaun would like to keep an eye on this issue and help the ranchers out.

Wild Horses – Jason is going to be at the meeting of the Wild Horse and Burro Advisory Board in Arizona this week. Secretary Salazar's proposal is not good. Jason feels they are sending down some directives that are going to make it hard on us. They are talking about reducing gathers by 24% and raising AML's. Jason will report the outcomes at a later meeting.

Community Forest Program – This is outside of Forest Service rule making process. They are using Forest Service dollars to give to local, tribal groups for educational purposes. There is a huge concern about this using Forest Service dollars to buy up your based property, therefore reducing that base property for grazing.

RFP – on the ground for Rangeland Health Program. Leanne said the information is on the Department website. She said there is also a short time-frame on the first round because the rules say that the Board of Agriculture has final say on approval of grants. They need to get the money on the ground as soon as possible. There is a committee that will review the proposals and make the recommendations to Jason, and then on to the Board at the April meeting. \$200,000 was appropriated

this year and if the first round doesn't get used, there will be another round. They want to get this money on the ground by the grazing season. The funding is only a one-time funding. There is going to be a request in the Department's exception budget next year. The challenge is getting the projects on the ground now and reporting the progress. Governmental entities are the ones that can make application. The announcement is going out today and they are due April 4, 2011. Leanne said there is a pilot project with Wyoming Stock Growers Association with Hendry's in Lander. They are also working with the Forest Service. The Sheridan Conservation District is meeting tonight and they are thinking about doing a project up on the forest.

Liaison Reports and Updates from Each Area

Shaun would like to have reports about 3 or 4 times a year. Shaun reported that he will attend the ADMB meeting at the end of April when they will go over annual funding. He has also been working with the conservation districts on the National on EAJA and Wild Lands.

John Hansen went to Stock Growers meeting in Saratoga "Voices of the Valley". He said the meeting didn't go as intended, as they ended up talking about Game and Fish and the need to move those animals.

Dalin reported that he attended the Seed Lab Advisory Group (SLAG) meeting and those results were brought to February meeting by Gil.

John Hansen made a motion to cancel the May 10, 2011 conference call because the Board will be meeting in Buffalo on May 25, 2010. The motion was seconded by Dalin Winters. All voted in favor. Motion carried.

Action items: Jason to report on the outcomes of the Wild Horse meeting he attended in March.
Shaun to report on the discussion with the Commissioners on the Commissioner licenses.

There being no additional business, the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Shaun Sims, President

Date